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**DISC IN
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Pharmakon

by

Brad Necyk

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts
in
Drawing and Intermedia

Department of Art and Design

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Spring 2014
Edmonton, Alberta

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Table of Contents

Curriculum Vitae

Thesis Statement

Image List

Photographic Images

Tub

Piss

Feet

Anti-epileptic

Anti-Psychotic

Benzos

Sleep

All-meds

Film Stills

Techniques (of care)

Techniques (of discipline)

Untitled (pilgrimage)

Bone Origin

Dice

Extraction

Teeth

Mixing

Pills

Mouth

One too many mornings

Part One: Internalization

Part Two: to be administered

Part Three: to stop

Part Four: to movement

Part Five: insomnia

Part Ten: A Thousand Miles Behind

Installation Documentation

Curriculum Vitae

Brad Necyk

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Education

MASTERS OF FINE ART

University of Alberta

Intermedia

Graduated 2013

BACHELOR OF FINE ARTS

University of Alberta

Major in Drawing and Intermedia

Graduated 2011 with Distinction

BACHELOR OF COMMERCE

University of Alberta

Major in Business Economic and Law

Graduated 2006

Solo Exhibitions

Pharmakon. October 1st-26th. FAB Gallery. Edmonton.

Selected Group Exhibitions

i see you pan. May 2013. Latitude 53. Edmonton.

Encoding/Decoding. May 2013. SNAP Gallery. Edmonton

Schmoozy. November 2012. Latitude 53 Gallery. Edmonton.

Petrocultures: Oil and Water. August 2012. Gallery at 501. Sherwood Park. Curated by Maria Whiteman

Insight. May 2012. FAB Gallery. Edmonton.

Coordinates of Comparison. March 2012. University of Alberta Faculty Club. Edmonton

Consumed. December 2011. Intermedia Lab at the University of Alberta. Edmonton

Schmoozy. December 2011. Latitude 53 Gallery. Edmonton.

Pharmakon. September 2011. The Critical Media Lab. Kitchener, Ontario. Curated by Marcel O'Gorman

Nextfest 2011. June 2011. Old Cycle Building. Edmonton.

From Soul to Seawater. April 2011. FAB Gallery. Edmonton.

Nextfest 2010. June 4-13 2010. Enterprise Square Gallery. Edmonton.

CACUSS 2010 conference. June 20 2010. University of Alberta. Edmonton.

Debutants Ball. Opening May 8 2010. Enterprise Square Art Gallery. Edmonton.

Blue Whale. March 27-April 17 2010. Enterprise Square Art Gallery. Edmonton.

Outer Noise. January to February 2010. Rutherford Library South. Edmonton.

Noise Play. November 2009. Great West Saddlery Gallery. Edmonton.

Go Figure. May 2009. Rutherford Library South Atrium. Edmonton.

Curated Shows

i see you pan. May 2013. Latitude 53. Edmonton.

Published Works

2013. Health Sciences Inquiry. Volume 4, Issue 1, 2013, page 16.

2013. Public: Art/Culture/Ideas. Special Issue: 'The Retreat'. Photo essay 'To be Administered'

2012 Insight. Show catalogue.

2010 Phabric. Fashion issue. 2 sculptures displayed.

2009 Skewed *Magazine*. Issue 7. Page 31. Glass Amplifier displayed.

Media

"Pharmakon: Brad Necyk's Master of Fine Arts final presentation" Curiousarts.ca, October 17, 2013.

"The Many Identities of Brad Necyk" St. Albert Gazette, by Scott Hayes, May 29, 2013.

"Long live the new flesh" Edmonton Journal, by Fish Griwkowsky, May 16, 2013.

"Banff residency taps top scholars for acclaimed exhibit" UAlberta News, by Bryan Alary, August 15, 2012.

Residencies

2012 The Retreat: A Position of dOCUMENTA (13). The Banff Centre.

Conference Papers

2013 Labyrinths: Navigating Complexity Across the Humanities, Montreal, Quebec.

Paper: A Case for Insomnia and the Spacio-Temporal Complexities of Biopolitics

2012 Society for Literature Science and the Arts (SLSA), *Nonhuman*, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (USA)

Paper: "The Aesthetics of Profound Boredom"

2012 Coordinates of Comparison 2012, Edmonton, AB

Paper: "What Does She Here? And other surface encounters"

Session: "Posthumanism"

2011 Society for Literature Science and the Arts (SLSA), *Pharmakon*, Kitchener, ON

Paper: "The Sublime Pharmaceutical"

Session: "Modern Literature"

Awards

Queen Elizabeth II Scholarship 2013

Graduate Student Scholarship 2013

SLSA Travel Grant 2012

Profiling Alberta's Graduate Students Award 2012

Alberta Foundations for the Arts Scholarship 2012

Graduate Students Association Travel Grant 2011

Jason Lang Scholarship for Academic Excellence in Undergraduate Studies, 2004, 2009, 2010

Faculty of Science First Class Standing 2004

Melcor Business Scholarship 2004

Young Entrepreneur Award 2004

Thesis Statement

Pharmakon

Brad Necyk

By placing the body at the center of politics and the potential for disease at the center of the body, it makes sickness, on the one hand, the outer margin from which life must continually distance itself, and on the other, the internal fold which dialectically brings it back to itself.

Immunitas, Roberto Esposito [15]

This work centers on the body and the various systems and structures that act upon and through the body in formation of a subject. I work in the mediums of photography, video, sound and performance all as means to most directly interact, react, archive and conceptualize a body saturated with both *technê* and *poiesis*. It is at this point between *technê* and *poiesis* that the functioning of psychiatry and pharmaceuticals upon the body becomes increasingly critical, as a means of capturing a reflective facet of the polymorphic heterogeneity of the contemporary subject as it moves in relation to these *dispositifs*. It is through an (auto)-biographical (re)-construction that the subject in this show is placed, opened, made to act, made to remember and made to speak, in order to examine the systems that acted upon him and he acted within.

This past May, the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* entered its fifth edition (DSM-V), broadening and extending the pathology of numerous illnesses, blurring much of their etiology while making sweeping changes to the nosology of mental illness. Many classifications have been reordered to include less frequent symptoms observed under shorter periods of duration. Others have been separated from a concrete diagnosis with a specific threshold of symptoms, frequencies and severities and split into spectrums, allowing a continuous degree of inclusion and treatment. Finally, there are completely new additions of previously common maladies, now with criteria, modes of treatment and statistical analysis. These changes have extensive implications for pharmaceutical companies, disability insurance claims and legal onus. The deviation from the mean, from the expected normal functioning of a subject, has now extended and multiplied, entering, classifying and pathologizing new bodies, taking hold of them, manipulating them and allowing them to enter onto whole new grids of tangibility. This new enveloping of bodies comes as its expansion and dilution of the norm forms more lines of entrance into the body, taking hold of it, naming it and treating it; however, as this apparatus gains access to the body it does not further distance the body from the disease which it wishes to eradicate, but, instead, it enfolds disease further *into* the body. It doubles back upon itself, not allowing a cutting then closure, but an opening and a further dispersion of lines of flight for the proliferation of new apparatuses. Esposito writes that “the pharmakon is what is opposed to its other not by excluding it, but, on the contrary, by incorporating and vicariously substituting it.”¹

Psychiatry formed as an apparatus of public hygiene; it was to delimit abnormalities of bodies, bodies unable to function with the new economic logic of capitalism. It took on new modalities of approach, no longer functioning through exclusion and expulsion, but took hold of them, named them, laid cause to them, allowing them to enter onto whole new grids of specification, of control and of care. The medicalization of psychiatry provided itself with productive lines of entry into the body while establishing a base for authority

¹ Roberto Esposito. *Immunitas*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), 127.

to develop knowledges, while also reforming expectations and norms of the public. It took the subjugated, the local, and the naïve knowledges and ordered, discarded, and developed them, attempting to totalize normal and the abnormal behaviour. It was the discovery of the compound Chlorpromazine, with its beginning in the textile industry, which spurred a revolution in psychiatric methodology, application and its potential for entry into the body. It was the first substance added to a body that did not simply sedate and slow behaviour to a clinically manageable level, but rather to alter and normalize behaviour. This was the beginning moment of psychiatry's complete anatomization of the body and regularization of biological processes through pharmaceuticals; this opened the psychiatric body to complete visibility.

Regularization of populations no longer fell like a sword but swelled on the floor and permeated up through the body. Esposito states that "no politics exists other than that *of* bodies, conducted *on* bodies, *through* bodies."² Wolfe continues this but deepens the hole by stating that "biopolitics acts fundamentally not on the "person" or the "individual," nor even, finally, on "the body," but rather at the even more elemental level called "flesh."³ The flesh, the commonplace of life, is the entry point of the apparatuses of biopolitics and thanatopolitics. These heterotopic bodies of flesh do not contradict the productivity of biopolitics or its degradation into thanatopolitics, but leaves them in suspension, constantly deferring one another, within the logic of the immunitary paradigm. There is no sublimation between the dispositifs of subjectivation and those of desubjectivation, between *bios* and *zoe*, but only space-between. It is open to its own closure, where "immunization is not only the protective shield for something that precedes it, but the object itself of protection."⁴ These networks of protection, once disciplined and static within institutions, have now grown more flexible, multiple and mobile, and through that, more pervasive. Law assumes its violence, medicine assumes its disease, and the subject assumes its poesis.

So at what cost does this poesis come? Surely to bring-forth oneself there must be something lost, as one cannot leave unscathed. Is this just the performative production of a subject in a biopolitical frame? A continuous string of performativity in the space-between? A historic formation of his time? Or is this what bare life looks like? What of the heterotopic man in faucet and reflection? He is flesh of pounds, indeed, but is he body as 'natural'? He consumes, he excretes and he cleans, that can be seen. But what does he see in that faucet? A scattering of photons? *Himself*? Or is it the reflection of the projection of his psyche? Who is he performing for? Is he not alone as he baths, urinates and exercises? He speaks though. He speaks statistics, he molds narratives and he breathes them but does not write them. He does read, but he reads aloud. Are the pill bottles not traces, the absent remains or constant stand-ins? Have they become as prosthetic for him as language is? Are not these breathes of words and sentences, these act of self-publishing just traces, distracting stand-ins, folding and filling of deep holes and fissures but telling none the closer to truth? He is in suspension; he was made to live when he should have not, twice now. Campbell wrote that "*bios* and not the self is the privileged object of genealogy."⁵ He is undoubtedly the product of *dispositifs* of interventions but looking at him move and listening to him talk there is an absence. Where is *he*? Is he the simply the object, a strategic tactic of genealogy? Is he just that epistemological and ontological horizon exposed through its historicity? Or is *his* absence a new space, like the space of the faucet, to enter into, gain tangibility, both real and utopic, to breathe in and fill?

² Roberto Esposito. *Bios*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 84.

³ Cary Wolfe. *Before the Law*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 50.

⁴ Roberto Esposito. *Immunitas*. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011), 50.

⁵ Timothy Campbell. *Improper Life*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 142.

Image List

Tub

Digital Print
60" x 90"
2012

Piss

Digital Print
60" x 90"
2012

Feet

Digital Print
24" x 36"
2012

Anti-epileptic

Digital Print in Light box
24" x 36"
2012

Anti-Psychotic

Digital Print in Light box
24" x 36"
2012

Benzos

Digital Print in Light box
24" x 36"
2012

Sleep

Digital Print in Light box
24" x 36"
2012

All-meds

Digital Print in Light box
48" x 72"
2012

Techniques (of care)

Film Still
2012

Techniques (of discipline)

Film Still
2012

Untitled (pilgrimage)

Bone Origin

Dice

Extraction

Teeth

Mixing

Pills

Mouth

Brad Necyk and Kyle Appelt
2012

One too many mornings

Part One: Internalization

Part Two: to be administered

Part Three: to stop

Part Four: to movement

Part Five: insomnia

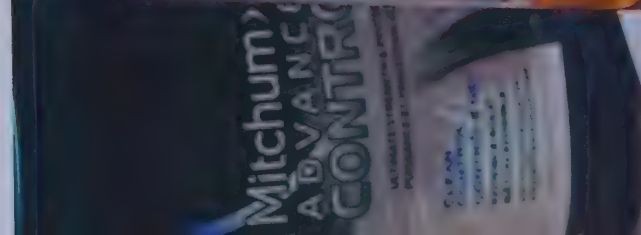
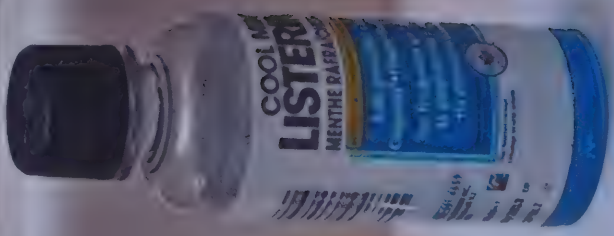
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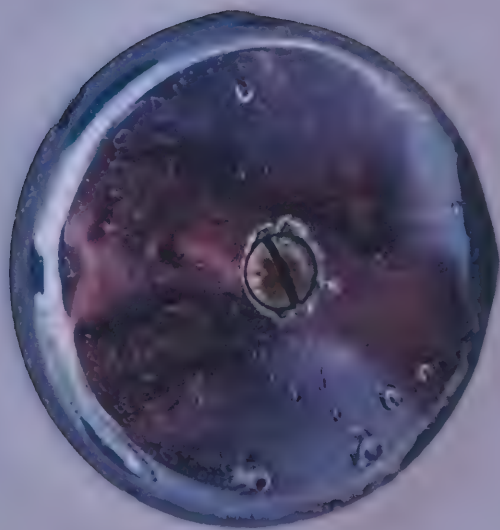
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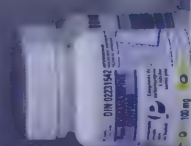
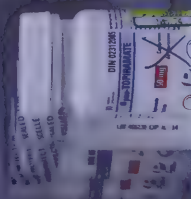
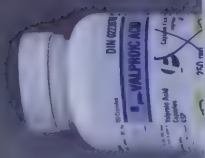
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2012

Photographic Images



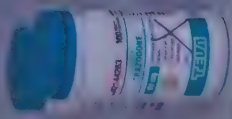
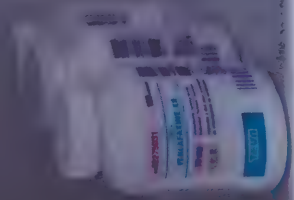
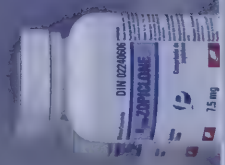
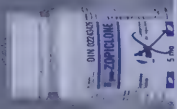
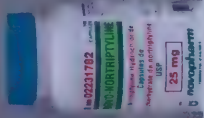
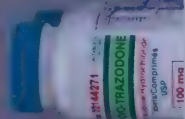


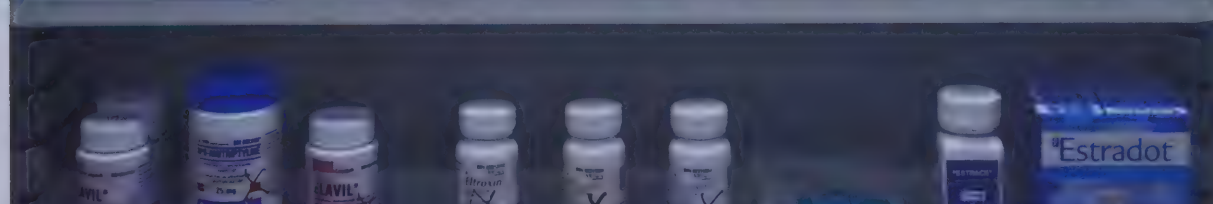
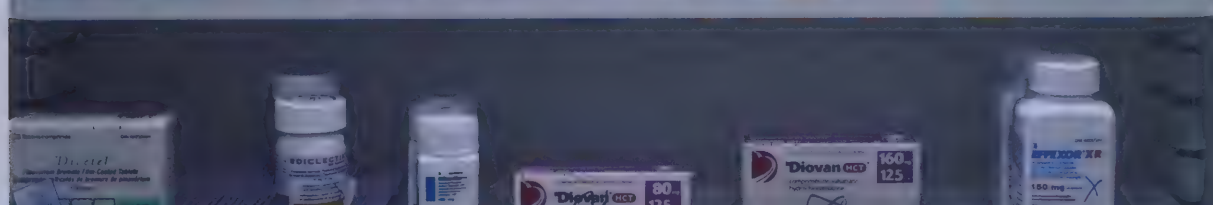
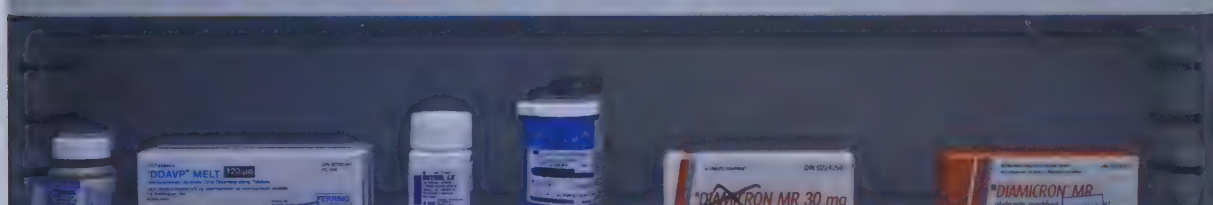
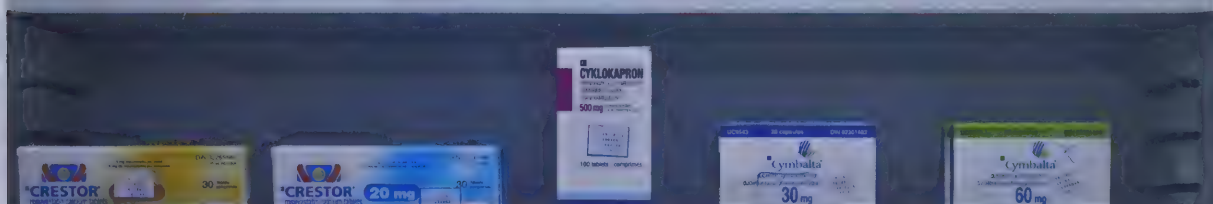
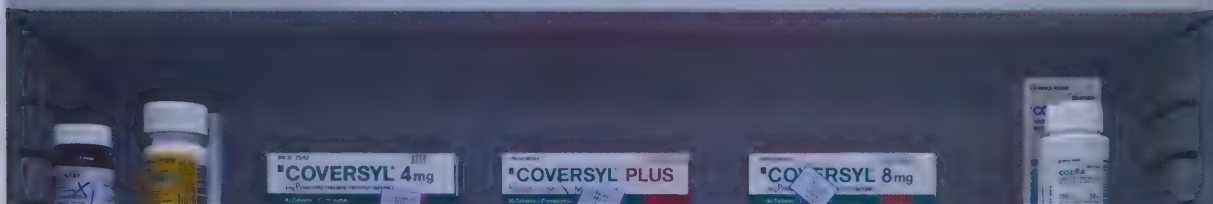
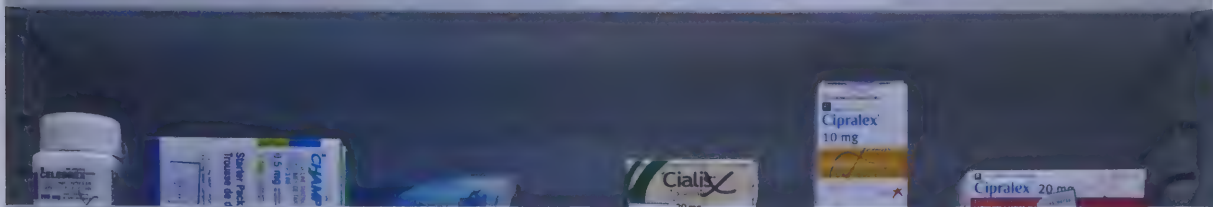
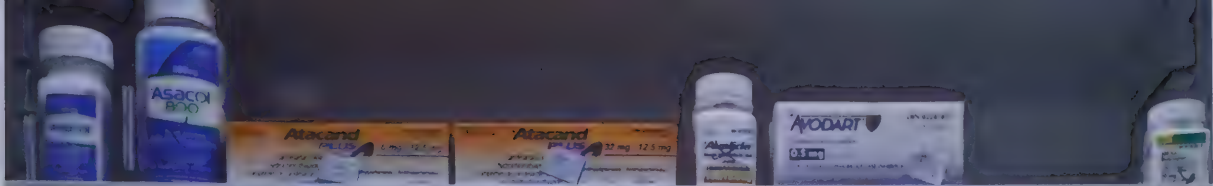






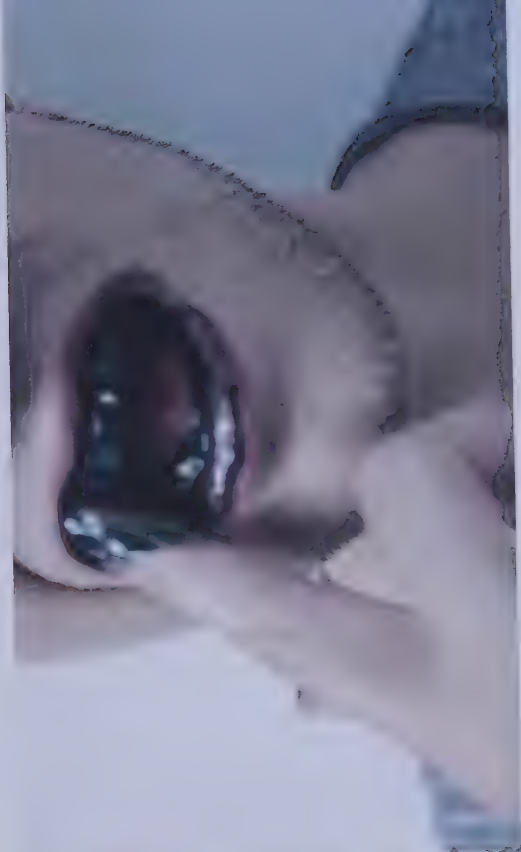


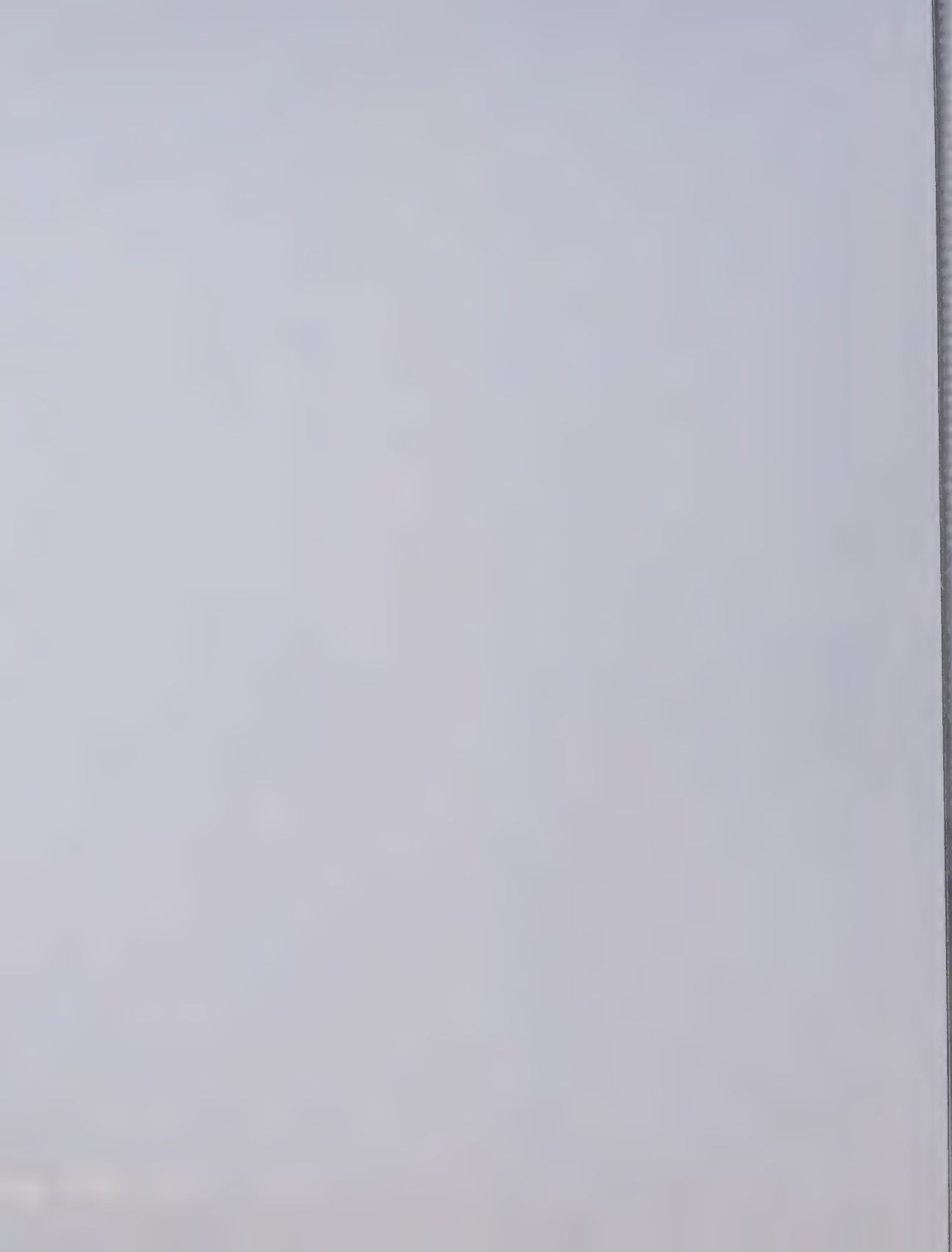


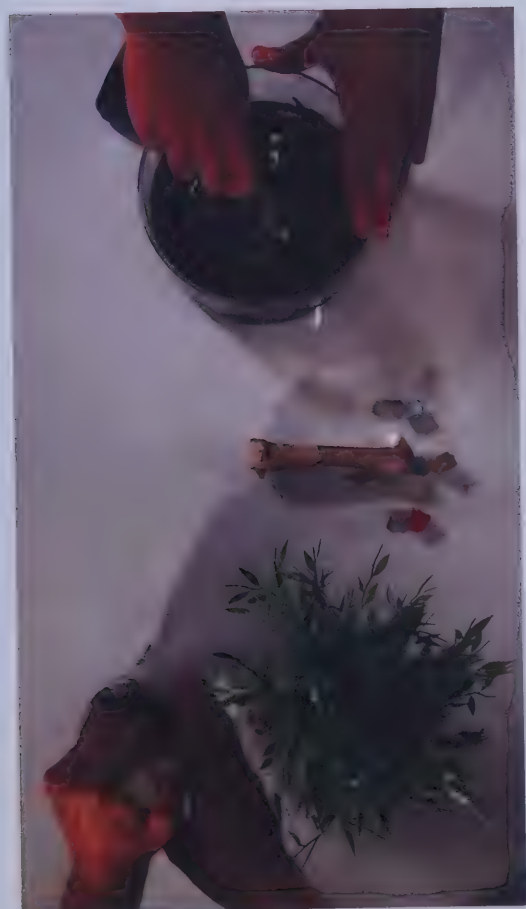


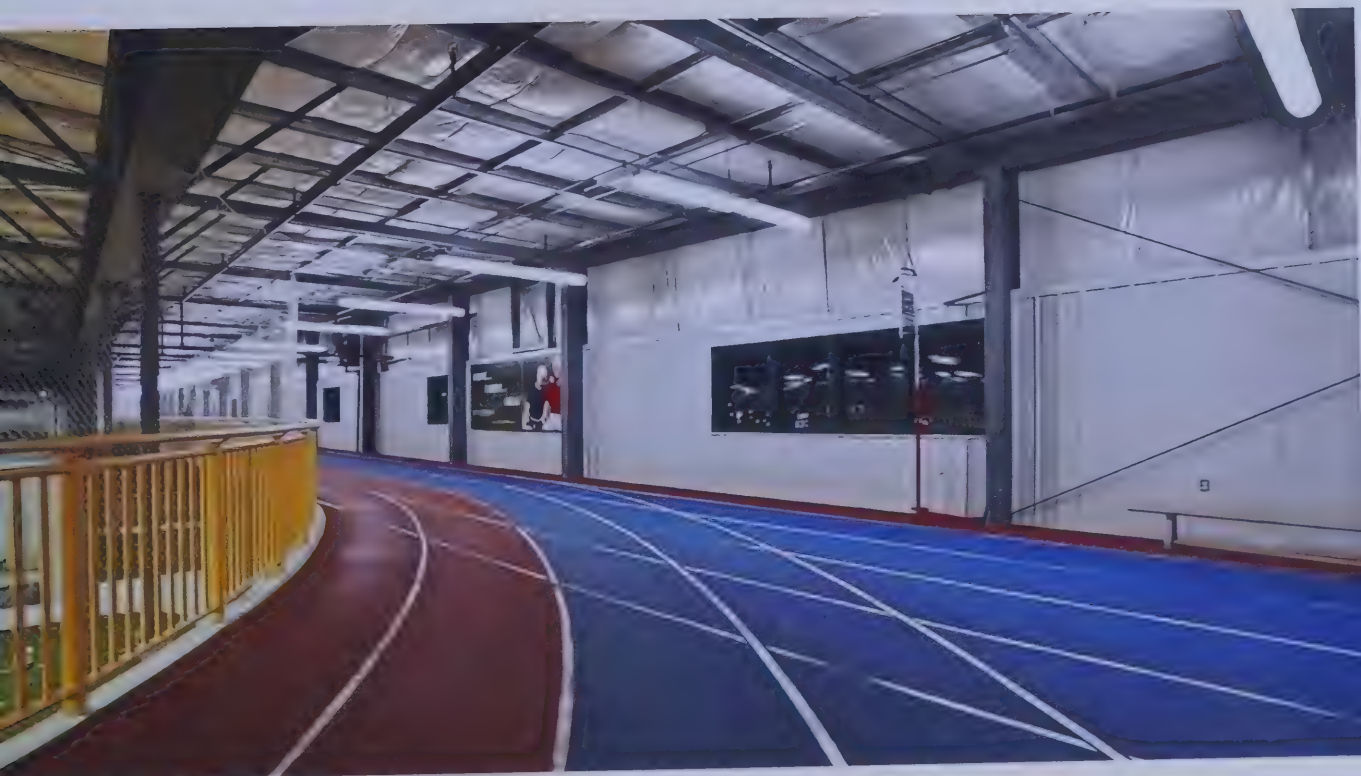
Film Stills













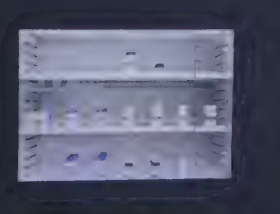
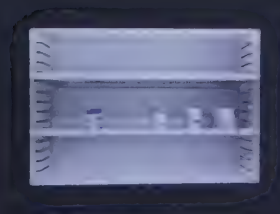
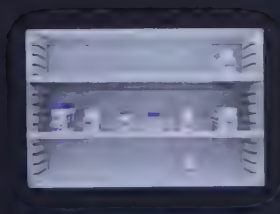


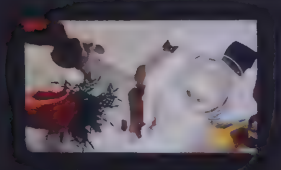
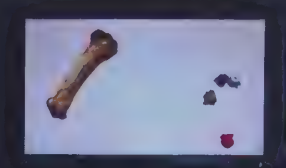
Installation Documentation

PHARMAKON

— 1994 —












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